

## Unit 10: Gender Issues

### Objectives

At the end of this unit, you will

### Be aware of the following

- Reasons for the traditional standing of women within Islam
- Broad East Asian Hindu, Buddhist, Confucian, Taoist, Muslim and Christian practice concerning women
- Equality of male/female spirituality within Islam
- Professions many Muslim women engage in
- Reasons for the popularity of hijab amongst Muslim women
- Militant fundamentalist practice regarding women's roles
- Progressive Muslim views on roles and status of women
- Changes advocated by selected progressive Islamic women's groups
- Overview, reasons for and impact of prostitution on U.S. Armed Forces personnel

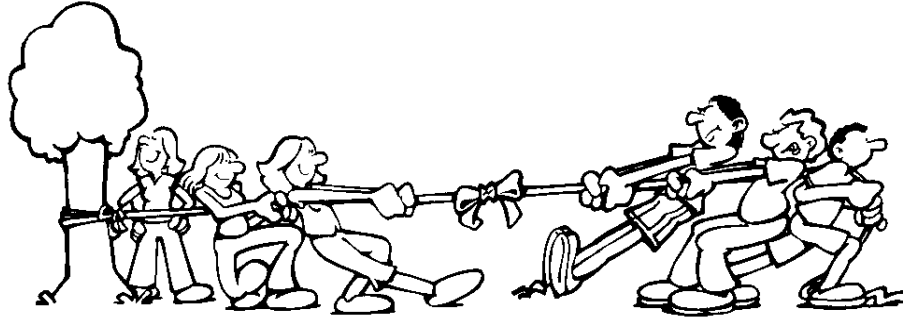
### Identify

- Chador; Sarawi, Huda
- Taliban
- Hadith, Sahria
- Traditional Islamic views of women's roles
- Hijab
- Sati
- Comfort women
- Yin/yang
- Filial piety
- Nongovernment Organizations (NGO)

## Realize

- Diversity of the role and position of women within East Asia
- Western media slant on women within Islam
- Complementary male/female roles within many Muslim societies
- Exploitation and illegality involved in East Asian sex trade
- Economic nature of prostitution in East Asia
- Double standard still existing for men/women

## Unit 10: Gender Issues



*"Leading Western scholars agree that Mongolian women traditionally have had relatively higher social positions and greater autonomy than women in the...societies of Inner Asia or in China and Korea."*

--Library of Congress Country Studies/Area Handbook--Mongolia.

*"On the surface, Korean women often appear docile, submissive, and deferential to the wishes of their husbands and in-laws. Yet behind the scenes, there is often considerable 'hidden' female power, particularly within the private sphere of the household."*

--L. of C. Country Studies--Korea, p. 107

*"On the whole, in the 1980s women were better off [in China] than their counterparts 50 or a 100 years before, and they had full legal equality with men. In practice, their opportunities and rewards were not entirely equal, and they tended to get less desirable jobs and to retain the burden of domestic chores in addition to full-time jobs."*

--L. of C. Country Studies--China.

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### I. Overview

**Variety** Throughout East Asia, gender issues related to the status of women receive various treatments--depending on country, culture or ethnic group.

In Mongolia, women have traditionally held higher social positions and achieved greater autonomy than

women in Islamic societies of Inner Asia or China and Korea.

In Myanmar (Burma), women enjoy a long-standing custom of high status, possessing many of the basic rights of men and taking an active role in business.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea) and People's Republic of China have proportional representation of women in the workforce, though few women reach high levels of the Communist Party or government.

Across the region, however, a tradition of attributing secondary status to women persists. Brothels, rumored "sex trades," abuse issues, and exploitation of children--especially girls--all through the region paint a dismal picture.

Many scholars see this as a continuing result of aspects of Confucian thought and practice within the region.

## II. Religious Perspectives

**1. Hindu Practice** Throughout the Hindu tradition there seems to be an ambivalent attitude towards women. On the one hand, female gods--Devi, Sakti, Parvati, Durga and Kali--embody traits of energy, initiative and vitality which are active in the universe.



Marriage and family are held in high esteem. Wives and mothers often are praised to excess. Even within the more negative aspects of the class system advocating traditional sex roles, female camaraderie, affection given by spouse, and respect bestowed wives,

mothers and daughters bolstered the woman's position and role.

On the other hand, women often are seen as lustful temptresses, sinful enticements for otherwise chaste men. The lingam (phallic) symbol of Siva seems to promote an attitude of male dominance. Poor Indian women undergo the worst of burdens--poverty, "slavery," and general abuse. Though outlawed, the practice of sati (SUH-tee), where widows would burn themselves on their husbands' funeral pyres, still casts a negative shadow. Also, the perception of females as instruments, subject to father, husbands and older sons is still common. (See Denise and John Carmody, Ways to the Center, p. 106.)

## 2. The Confucian Tradition

*"Traditional Chinese society was male-centered. Sons were preferred to daughters, women were expected to be subordinate to fathers, husbands, and sons. A young woman had little voice in the decision of her marriage partner (neither did a young man)."*

*When married, it was she who left her natal family and community and went to live in a family and community of strangers where she was subordinate to her mother-in-law.*



*Far fewer women were educated than men, and sketchy but consistent demographic evidence would seem to show that female infants and children had higher death rates and less chance of surviving to adulthood than males. In extreme cases, female infants were the victims of infanticide, and daughters were sold, as chattels, to brothels or to wealthy families. Bound feet, which were customary even for peasant women, symbolized the painful constraints of the female role." (L. of C. Country Studies: China.)*

Author John Hersey, in his novel The Call, elaborates on the practice of foot binding. "A binder had come on her monthly visit to wash and rebind the feet of a little girl of about eight..."

The binder unwound wide bandages and finally the 'golden lilies' were uncovered...The toes had been relentlessly curled back under the soles...sometimes bones were broken, but they mended while bound...

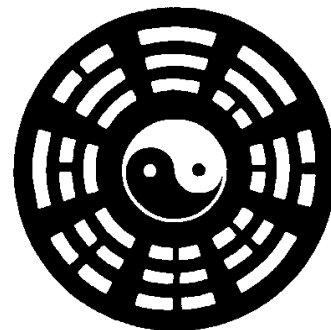


The little girl had been given to believe that she was a person of great importance, to be inspected in this way. She never whimpered, but when the work was done, she sat holding her feet in her hands...When she was fully grown, the binder said, her feet would be very beautiful...she would walk like a willow, the binder said, with seductive mincing steps...so as to cause great excitement among all the young men!" (p. 189)

Confucian practice concerning women--delegating their position to that of subservience to men--stems in part from the following nature of its thought.

### a. Yin/yang Yin and Yang interact harmoniously.

As part of this balance, traditionally men were associated with "yang," women with "yin." Yin displays qualities of darkness, cold, death, ghosts, graves and fear--often traits acquiring a negative status. The linkage of the feminine with "yin" seems to color women in this negative light as well. Over the centuries, such thought influenced practice towards them.



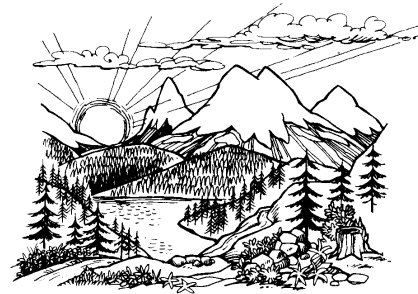
**b. Family** Filial piety--the relations guiding children with their parents and past generations--delegated responsibilities and importance to eldest sons. Two of the five relationships--father/son and husband/wife--promote social mores of male superiority.

The woman's status becomes one where she obeys and serves her parents, her husband and husband's parents, and produces a male heir. The ideal woman becomes someone who is retiring, silent and fertile. She possesses inner strength and is known for her forbearance and patient sense of restraint.

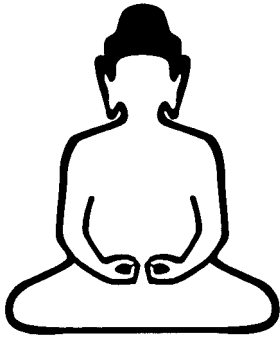
In South Korea, the cumulative effect of the Confucian tradition led Harvard professor Tu Wei-ming to write, the "blatant insensitivity in deprecating gender equality reflects an East Asian mentality with deep Confucian roots." ("Confucianism," in Our Religions, p. 214.)

**3. Taoist Trends** With its emphasis upon natural simplicity, infinite potential and distaste for confining rules, limiting regulations and excessive laws, Taoism may seem to advocate little more than a mindless submissiveness and lack of involvement in societal issues. However, this school of thought exerted a strong influence on Chinese society--especially concerning the position of women.

In focusing upon the lowly individuals in society (nature's "valleys"), Taoist practitioners upgraded the position of women and curtailed murder of female infants. The philosophical ideals of passivity, adaptability and a sense of yielding all flowed from traditional understandings of "female" virtues.



**4. Buddhist Thought** The equality given women within the Sangha demonstrates the Buddhist ideal for society.



*"The Buddha's equal concern for both sexes...is made clear in a passage where he says that he would not die until the monks and nuns, laymen and laywomen were well trained." (Dhammapada 11.104, Peter Harvey, An Introduction to Buddhism, p. 216.)*

Due however, to pregnancy, childbirth, menstruation and uniting with the husband's family, in practice female rebirth became viewed in a less favorable light. During child bearing years, Theravadan Buddhist practice traditionally excludes women from major religious activity.

Some Buddhist women are reasserting their desire for equality. The Venerable Chung Ok Lee, head minister of the Won Buddhist United Nations Office, is working to create a more unified, equality promoting social structure for men and women. Themes addressed in the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, China, in Sept. 1995 support such trends. (See Joel Beversluis, A Sourcebook for Earth's Community of Religions, p. 273.)

## 5. Islam



### a. Helpful Outlooks

(1) **Variety** Islam in southeast Asia incorporates practice and thought from ancestral Hindu, Buddhist and indigenous religious belief. Thus, while the Qur'an, hadith, and Sharia give distinct instruction concerning a woman's role and position, there is diversity when implementing this guidance, especially within Southeast Asian Muslim circles.



Customs vary concerning women's dress. Some fundamentalist extremists seek to impose strict Islamic social codes requiring head-to-foot shrouds. They would restrict women to the practice of nursing or medicine alone. Progressive women seek reform in restrictive clothing practices, and in economic, education, and decision-making policies.



No single Muslim position on women exists.

**(2) Western Media Negativity** Our media often portrays Muslim women as victims of Islamic resurgence. Negative treatments of polygamy, divorce by simple repudiation, veil wearing, segregation of the sexes, imprisonment in household tasks, dependence on the husband and lack of legal rights are the focus. The positive, stability enhancing, personally fulfilling dimensions of the discussion are often overlooked.

### **(3) Complementary Roles**

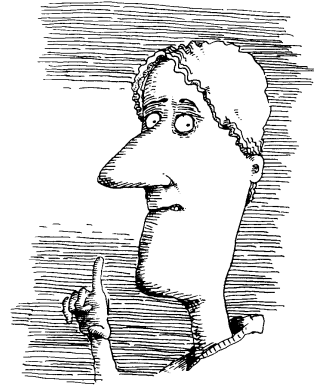
*"Tradition-oriented [Muslim] men and women do not view the social customs and restrictions as repressive, but as complementary to the status and nature of women. They see the restrictions as providing protection for women so that they need not be subjected to the stress, competition, temptations, and possible indignities present in 'outside' society."* (Margaret Nydell, Understanding Arabs, p. 55.)

**(4) Assumption of Male/Female Emotional and Physical Differences** Most interpreters of the Qur'an accept the notion of radical, distinct emotional as well as physical differences between the sexes. (See Dr. Gamal Badawi's The Status of Woman in Islam.)

Three treatments of Islamic women's rights--the traditional, fundamentalist, and progressive--assist our understanding.

### b. Traditional Views of the Standing of Women

The Status of Women in Islam, a pamphlet by Dr. Gamal A. Badawi, published by The Muslim Students Association of the United States and Canada, outlines conventional perspectives on Islam's treatment of women. Dr. Badawi's perspective is instrumental in understanding traditional women's roles. His views seem to accurately portray traditional Muslim positions.



**(1) The Historical Context** Given the dismal status of women in seventh century Middle East society, Islam did much to restore dignity and individual rights.

**(2) Spiritual Equality** Before God, men and women are on equal footing.

*"The Prophet said, 'All people are equal, as equal as the teeth of a comb. An Arab is no better than a non-Arab, nor is a white person over a black person, nor is a male superior to the female. The only people who enjoy preference with God are the devout.'"*  
(Hadith as quoted in Marston Speight, God is One, p. 50.)

**(3) Social Position in the Home** *"The Qur'an clearly indicates that marriage is a sharing between the two halves of the society, and that its objectives, beside perpetuating human life, are emotional well-being and spiritual harmony."*

*Its bases are love and mercy...'And among His signs is this: That He created mates for you from yourselves that you may find rest, peace of mind in them, and He ordained between you love and mercy. Lo, herein indeed are signs for people who reflect.'*"  
(Sura 30:21, Badawi, p. 16.)



**(4) Economic Position** "According to Islamic Law, a woman's right to her money, real estate, or other properties is fully acknowledged. This right undergoes no change whether she is single or married..."

*With regard to the woman's right to seek employment...Islam regards her role in society as a mother and a wife as the most sacred and essential one. Neither maids nor baby-sitters can possibly take the mother's place as the educator of upright, complex-free, and carefully-reared children. Such a noble and vital role, which largely shapes the future of nations, cannot be regarded as 'idleness.'*



*...there is no decree in Islam which forbids a woman from seeking employment whenever there is a necessity for it, especially in positions which fit her nature and in which society needs her most. Examples of these professions are nursing, teaching (especially for children), and medicine. Moreover, there is no restriction on benefiting from woman's exceptional talent in any field. Even for the position of a judge...we find early Muslim scholars...holding there is nothing wrong with it."* (Badawi, p. 22.)

**(5) Political Dimensions** Political involvement--election, nomination to political office, participation in public affairs--in some Islamic circles is not limited to men alone. However, throughout the Middle Eastern world and much of Southeast Asia, most Muslim women are ineligible to become heads of state.

**(6) Hijab** (HEHZH-yahb) Analysts often interpret the growing, widespread popularity of hijab (traditional Muslim dress for women, including covering of the head), as indicating a rise of traditionalist Islam.

Judith Miller, in describing the difficulty of assessing the depth of what some depict as the growing Islamic fervor, outlines the following reasons for a woman's use of traditional dress:



**(a) Expense** Cost of cosmetics and trips to hairdressers is greatly reduced by wearing traditional garb.

**(b) Psychological distance** In crowded living conditions, hijab maintains a safe haven--even in the midst of congested conditions.

**(c) Safety** Traditional dress says "This is a devout woman. Leave her alone."

**(d) Mobility** In conservative cultures, the chador (woman's shawl) allows a woman to venture outside the confines of her home.

**(e) Fashion** For some women, wearing hijab is a statement of fashion and generational rebellion. (See God Has Ninety-Nine Names, pp. 469, 470.)

### c. Fundamentalist Outlooks

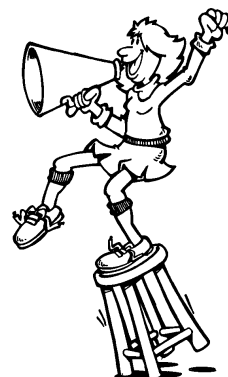


In Afghanistan, recent imposition of strict Sharia ruling bars most women from working outside the home or going to school. Taliban clerics and militia seek to reestablish medieval guidelines within this war-torn country. Perceived discrimination against women is the result.

On 7 Oct 1996, the United Nations formally objected to this extreme treatment, warning that foreign aid programs may be disrupted unless change incurs.

### d. Progressive Views

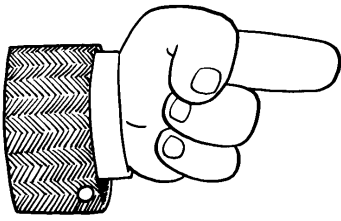
One of this century's first progressive women was Egypt's Huda Sarawi (hoo-DAH sah-RAH-wee). In 1923, she threw her veil into the Mediterranean, becoming one of the first women to become unveiled.



In response, her husband quickly divorced her. In time, she founded the Egyptian Feminist Union, which promoted nationalism, education for women, and an outlawing of the veil.

Today, a broad based woman's group, the "Sisters in Islam," advocates laws against domestic violence. They promote Qur'an interpretation by women textual critics.

Across North Africa, the Middle East, and Southeast Asia, advocates of Muslim women's rights seek equality in education, property rights, and business opportunity.



*"They also want reform in Muslim family laws that often leaves them at the mercy of men who can divorce them without warning, take away their children, deny them the right to travel and bequeath them as chattel to the next male relative."*

(See Barbara Crossette, "Women's Rights Gaining Attention Within Islam," New York Times, 12 May 1996, p. A3.)

**6. Christian Influence** Christian agencies active in East Asia did much to open future possibilities for women--especially in the arena of education. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Christian missionaries established schools for girls in China, Korea and Japan.

Many of these same missionaries became advocates--whether overtly in voicing concern to local governments, or more quietly through personal influence--of causes dealing with female infanticide, foot binding, prostitution, abuse and abandonment.

Presently, nongovernment organizations (NGO) with Christian ties--World Vision, Catholic World Relief, World Council of Churches, various mission organizations--seek to positively address and treat concerns of women/girls in the region.

On the other hand, church influence in a country like the Philippines can lead to practices which negatively impact women. Church opposition to divorce is strong. Annulment, though fairly easy, comes at a legal cost which is too expensive for many women.



*"The practice of 'unofficial divorce' (permanent separation) is common among lower income families; in these cases the wife is usually left with the children, and the husband provides little or no financial support."* (U.S. Department of State, Philippines Report on Human Rights Practices for 1996, released 30 Jan 1997.)

### III. Issues

**1. Prostitution** Arguably, the most significant gender issue affecting deployed U.S. Armed Forces personnel is that of prostitution.



Whether walking the streets; in "vills" (areas dedicated to capture G.I. dollars) or brothels; provided on joint officer/NCO exchanges or employed as "domestic servants," women who provide sexual favors for cash are present throughout East Asian areas frequented by members of the U.S. Armed Forces.

This section gives an overview, selected reasons for the condition, and aspects of the impact upon Armed Forces personnel.

**a. Overview** The following report from the U.S. Department of State, Thailand Report on Human Rights Practices for 1996, paints a picture of prostitution in that country. Though not indicative of conditions in all East Asian countries--the report shows the prevalence of the prostitution practice.

*"Prostitution, although illegal, flourishes and is deeply ingrained. Estimates of the numbers of women and children engaged in prostitution vary widely because of temporary sex workers and the migratory nature of*

prostitution. Reliable NGO's estimate the number of adult female prostitutes at around 250,000.

Prostitution exposes women to a number of human rights abuses, as well as a much higher risk of contracting AIDS. Some women are forced into prostitution, although the number of such cases is difficult to determine.

Incidents of coerced prostitution most commonly involve women who are not ethnic Thai from hill tribes or are from neighboring countries; the number of such women entering the country to work as prostitutes continues to rise. Because they cannot speak Thai, and are considered illegal immigrants, these women are particularly vulnerable to physical abuse, confinement, and exploitation.

Some women are lured with promises of jobs as waitresses or domestic helpers, but are then forced to work as prostitutes. As illegal immigrants, these women have no right to legal counsel or health care if arrested, and this group is not protected under new regulations concerning illegal alien workers.



Human rights monitors believe that the majority of those who engage in prostitution are not kept under physical constraint, but that a large number labor in debt bondage. Brothel procurers often advance parents a substantial sum against their daughter's future earnings, often without the consent of the young woman involved. The women are then obligated to work in a brothel in order to pay back the loan.

On the border with Cambodia, procurers provide women and girls as young as the age of 14 who were trafficked from Vietnam or China and live under slave-like circumstances in Cambodia. Observers believe that



*their illegal border crossing for the purposes of prostitution is accomplished with the complicity of local officials."*

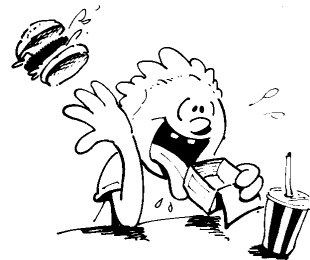
Legal and enforcement efforts--by government and international agencies--are in place throughout the region, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; Economic and Social Council work; Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others; and the Fourth World Conference on Women and Nongovernmental Organizations Forum on Women held in Beijing, China in Sep 1995.

In portions of Japan, South Korea, and the Philippines, "military installations have resulted in considerable demand for prostitutes despite restrictive legislation." (See Encyclopedia Britannica, Vol 15, 1975, p. 78.)

## b. Reasons

**(1) Economic** Historically, monetary concerns are one of the primary reasons prostitution exists. Whether due to greed, exploitation or poverty, finances are a big part of the business.

**(a) Greed** In some East Asian countries, prostitution offers a fairly easy means to gain wealth. It also provides a "quick fix" for acquisitive emotional desires.



**(b) Exploitation** In Myanmar, trafficking in "women and girls remains a serious problem. There were reliable reports that many women and children in border areas, where the Government's control is limited, were forced or lured into working as prostitutes in Thailand. It is unknown how many young women have been deceived into working as prostitutes, but a common practice is to lure young women to Thailand with promises of employment as a waitress or domestic servant." (L. of C. Country Studies--Burma.)



Within the Philippines, use of others for selfish profit sees women and girls "in the lower economic stratum seeking economic improvement through employment overseas.

They are particularly vulnerable to exploitation by unethical recruiters who promise jobs abroad or, in some cases, arrange marriages with foreign men. Some find work only as prostitutes or suffer abuse at the hands of their foreign employers or husbands.

Those recruited to work as maids, entertainers, or models may, while overseas, be forced to participate in public shows or dances where nudity and the prospect of sex is the principal attraction." (L. of C. Country Studies--Philippines.)

Similar conditions exist in China. "The increased commercialization of sex and related trafficking in women has trapped tens of thousands of women in a cycle of crime and exploitation. These women face a high risk of drug addiction, AIDS, and other sexually transmitted diseases. According to media reports, 80 percent of Beijing's massage parlors offer sex services.



In July the Beijing municipal government announced a crackdown on massage parlors in the capital, but the long-term effectiveness of the crackdown on this lucrative business, which involves organized crime groups...

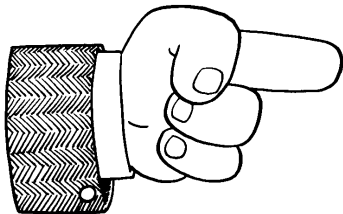
*business people, and even the military is uncertain. Unsafe working conditions are rampant among the saunas, massage houses, and hostess bars that have sprung up in large numbers.*

*The abduction of women is a serious and growing problem. The Government continued to condemn and to take steps to prevent and punish the abduction and sale of women for marriage or prostitution." (L. of C. Country Studies--China)*

**(c) Poverty** What is true of South Korea could apply to many other East Asian countries.

*"In some cases, they [lower class women] were obliged to become part of the 'entertainment industry' in order to survive economically.*

*According to one estimate, brothels, bars, massage parlors, discos, and what are known as 'Taiwan style' barbershops (that is, those often employing a greater number of masseuses than barbers) employed as many as 1 million women, though not all were prostitutes.*



*This underworld of abuse, exploitation, and bitter shame has begun to be criticized and exposed by women's activists." (Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, South Korea--A Country Study, p. 108.)*

*Prostitution remains an illegal, though widespread fact of life for poor, disadvantaged women--slaves, captives, divorcees, widows, outcasts, the unmarried--who have limited economic and job opportunities.*

**(2) Men over Women** In South Korea, the "tradition of total female submission persisted in Korean villages until relatively recent times. Even today, an "extreme double standard concerning the sexual behavior of married men and women" persists. (Country Study, South Korea, p. 105.)

Japan's 1993 public acknowledgment and apology for comfort women could be interpreted, in part as the result of traditional "men over women" perspectives.

The Imperial government, in the past, condoned the Japanese army's practice of forcing an estimated 200,000 women (including Koreans, Filipinas, Chinese, Indonesians, Burmese, Dutch, and Japanese) to provide sex to soldiers between 1932 and 1945."



Presently, the "Asian Women's Fund was established in July 1995 as a private, government-sponsored fund to compensate former comfort women. The fund will support three projects. The first will provide direct compensation payments to individual victims and will be financed entirely through private donations. A second projects will provide medical and welfare assistance to individual comfort women. A third will fund projects to improve the general status of women and girls in Asia." (Library of Congress Country Studies--Japan.)

**(3) Subordination to Family** A poverty related perspective sees women accepting questionable jobs-- prostitutes, entertainers, models, hostesses, masseuses--to support parents, children or other family members.

### c. Impact on Armed Forces Personnel

For isolated, comparatively wealthy, sometimes lonely Armed Forces personnel stationed in East Asia or visiting on a short TDY stint, participation in the sex trade can seem an overwhelming and attractive temptation. Consideration of the following issues, in addition to the matters raised above, may assist personnel in dealing with the issue.

**(1) Risk** Participating in the prostitution trade--whether legally or illegally--involves physical and emotional/psychological risk. Physical hazards are well-known--exposure to venereal diseases, AIDs, and an underground world lucrative for criminal activity.



Less familiar are the emotional/psychological risks. For married personnel, the dissonance raised in "playing the Asian field" while having wives and children back home can effect emotional ties once a return to CONUS (Continental United States) occurs. Whether single or married, engaging in a kaleidoscopic venue of sexual favors cannot but impact relations involving more long-term commitments.

## **(2) Values**

Armed Forces personnel represent the United States. As military members, we possess values--integrity, selfless service, commitment, competence, loyalty--which apply whether in or out of uniform. When participating in a questionable trade, it defames these values.



Marriage vows are dishonored. Religious ethical practice is ridiculed. The illegality of the prostitution trade is increasingly seen as a crime, not only by those who sell the services, but by clients engaging in the business.

**(3) System Perpetuation** In a recent (25 Mar 1997) U.S. Department of State report to the United Nations Human Rights Commission, delegate Robert Loftus stated, *"If outright chattel slavery has ended in almost every country of the world, there continues to be an alarming number of closely related practices."*

*One of the most reprehensible of these is the trafficking of women and girls for sexual purposes. The responsibility for this loathsome practice, which is particularly prevalent in certain countries of southern and southeast Asia, but also growing elsewhere in the world, is not solely confined to those who conduct the sex trade. Those who engage in sexual tourism are equally culpable." Military members who engage in the sex trade are guilty of sustaining and maintaining the practice.*



## 2. Women in the People's Republic of China

The following narrative, adapted from the Library of Congress Country Studies/Area Handbooks Program, gives an overview of the current standing of women in the People's Republic of China.



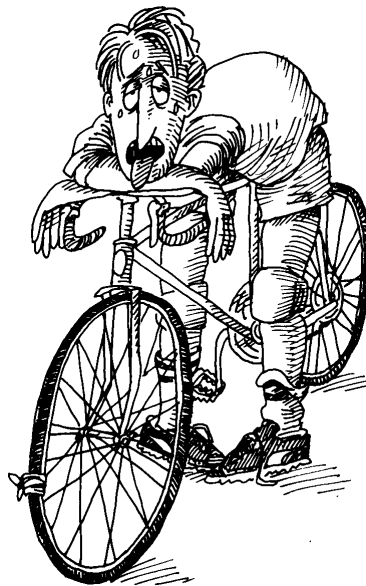
*"...while party leaders condemned the oppression and subordination of women as one more aspect of the traditional society they were intent on changing, they did not accord feminist issues very high priority. In the villages, party members were interested in winning the loyalty and cooperation of poor and lower-middle-class male peasants, who could be expected to resist public criticism of their treatment of their wives and daughters.*

*Many party members were poor and lower-middle-class peasants from the interior, and their attitudes toward women reflected their background. The party saw the liberation of women as depending, in a standard*

*Marxist way, on their participation in the labor force outside the household.*

*The position of women in contemporary society has changed from the past, and public verbal assent to propositions about the equality of sexes and of sons and daughters seems universal. Women attend schools and universities, serve in the People's Liberation Army, and join the party. Almost all urban women and the majority of rural women work outside the home.*

*But women remain disadvantaged in many ways, economic and social, and there seems no prospect for substantive change."*



*"Stay committed."*

## Vocabulary List: Gender Issues

**Chador** (chah-DUHR) The woman's shawl (head covering) used by many Middle Eastern women

**Comfort women** An estimated 200,000 Korean, Philippine, Chinese, Indonesian, Burmese, Dutch and Japanese women forced to provide sex to Japanese soldiers during 1932-1945.

**Complementary roles** Traditional outlook which sees man as protector, and women enjoying the fruits of this guardianship in the security, protection, and respect given them in the home.

**Filial piety** Relations guiding children with their parents and past generations. Often elaborate and showing great respect for elders, both living and departed, this tradition is basic to most East Asian peoples.

**Fundamentalist positions of Islamic women** Advocates who apply strict interpretations of the Qur'an and sharia to women. Many bar women from working outside the home or attending higher educational institutions.

**Hadith** (hah DEETH) Reports of what Muhammad, or his companions, said and did. Next to the Qur'an, hadith is the most important source of Muslim instruction.

**Hijab** (HEHZH-yab) The complete head and body covering style of dress employed by many Middle Eastern women

**Nongovernment Organization (NGO)** Groups active within a country who are allowed by the government, yet not supported by government structures. United Nations groups, humanitarian agencies and mission organizations are examples of NGOs.

**Progressive Islamic positions regarding women** Muslims who work for full women's legal and religious rights. The "Sisters of Islam" is one such movement within Islam. Members advocate laws against domestic violence and Qur'an interpretations formulated by women theologians.



**Sarawi, Huda** (hoo-DAH sah-RAH-wee) One of Egypt's first progressive women. In 1923, she threw her veil into the Mediterranean. Eventually, Sarawi founded the Egyptian Feminist Union.

**Sati** (SUH-tee) Traditional Hindu practice, now outlawed, where widows would burn themselves on their husbands' funeral pyres.

**Sharia** (sha REE ah) The religious law of Islam. Sharia can vary from state to state and within various Muslim movements.

**Taliban** (tahl-ee-BAHN) Militant Islamist student youth movement in Afghanistan which currently rules 70 percent of the country.

**Traditional Islamic views of the woman's position** While spiritually equal, women are barred from leadership positions outside the home. Their sphere of influence, and grounds for respect, stem from the position taken within the home and family.

**Woman's economic position within Islam** The Qur'an guarantees property, inheritance, and monetary rights to women, whether single or married. In practice, these rights are often percentages less than those given their male counterparts.

## Review Quiz: Gender Issues



### Part 1--Matching

Place the correct letter in the blank provided.

- |                                    |   |
|------------------------------------|---|
| 1. _____ Taliban                   | A. The woman's shawl (head covering) used by many Middle Eastern women.   |
| 2. _____ Hadith                    | B. Reports of what Muhammad, or his companions, said and did. Next to the Qur'an, it is the most important source of Muslim instruction.  |
| 3. _____ Sharia                    | C. One of Egypt's first progressive women. In 1923, she threw her veil into the Mediterranean. Eventually, she founded the Egyptian Feminist Union.   |
| 4. _____ Sarawi, Huda              | D. The religious law of Islam. It can vary from state to state and within various Muslim movements.   |
| 5. _____ Women's economic position | E. Militant Islamist student youth movement in Afghanistan which currently rules 70 percent of the country.   |
| 6. _____ Chador                    | F. The Qur'an guarantees property, inheritance, and monetary rights to women, whether single or married. In practice, these rights are often percentages less than those given their male counterparts. |
-

**Part 2--True or False** Place a T or an F in the blank provided.



1. \_\_\_\_\_ Islamic customs and traditions regarding women are the same throughout the world.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ Some fundamentalist extremists seek a return to head-to-foot shrouds for women.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ The Western media often portrays Muslim women as victims of the Islamic resurgence.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ Many Muslim women feel satisfied with the security, protection, and respect accorded them by the present Islamic social system.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ Within Islamic circles, the veil can signify the invisibility of a woman within the man's territorial space.
6. \_\_\_\_\_ Many traditional interpreters of the Qur'an assume male/female psychological, emotional, and physical differences.
7. \_\_\_\_\_ According to many interpreters of the Qur'an, men and women are on equal footing before God.
8. \_\_\_\_\_ Within Islam, male leadership in the home means the husband is a dictator over his wife.
9. \_\_\_\_\_ Some progressive Islamic women advocate education, economic, and legal reforms concerning the position of women within Middle Eastern society.
10. \_\_\_\_\_ In traditional Confucian thought, women are usually associated with "yang" traits.
11. \_\_\_\_\_ Taoist practice was so otherworldly it has little impact upon gender issues.

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12. \_\_\_\_\_ In the Buddhist tradition, women are excluded from participation in the Sangha.
  13. \_\_\_\_\_ Establishing schools and colleges for girls/women in China, Korea and Japan is one aspect of long-term Christian influence on gender issues in East Asia.
  14. \_\_\_\_\_ Exploitation, greed and poverty are all aspects of economic reasons prostitution exists.
  15. \_\_\_\_\_ Some women accept employment in the sex trade so they may support their extended families.
  16. \_\_\_\_\_ There are few emotional/psychological risks in engaging the sex trade.
  17. \_\_\_\_\_ U.S. Armed Forces personnel who engage in the East Asian sex trade do little to perpetuate the system.
  18. \_\_\_\_\_ In much of Southeast Asia, Islam is also tied to pre-Islamic, indigenous practice.
  19. \_\_\_\_\_ Traditional hijab dress by Islamic women can be a fashion statement.
  20. \_\_\_\_\_ The historical Buddha seemed unconcerned with the status of women.
- 



### Part 3--Multiple Choice

Place the letter of the most correct response in the blank provided.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ The Qur'an, in advocating spiritual equality of women, \_\_\_\_\_ their position in seventh century Middle Eastern society.
  - a. lowered
  - b. elevated
  - c. maintained

2. \_\_\_\_\_ An objective of marriage according to the Qur'an is
  - a. emotional well-being and spiritual harmony.
  - b. fulfillment for all personal ambitions.
  - c. guaranteed individual satisfaction.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ Professions open to many Middle East Muslim women are
  - a. nursing, education and medicine.
  - b. national political office.
  - c. factory directorates.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ Within Islam, differences in male/female roles imply
  - a. male supremacy.
  - b. female supremacy.
  - c. complementary roles of both sexes in life.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ What is NOT a reason for the popularity of Hijab amongst Muslim women?
  - a. Psychological and physical protection
  - b. A chic form of generational rebellion
  - c. Fashion consciousness
  - d. Egyptian feminist Huda Sarawi advocated its use.
6. \_\_\_\_\_ Taliban clerics seek to reestablish \_\_\_\_\_ guidelines in Afghanistan.
  - a. progressive Islamic
  - b. medieval Islamic
  - c. equality of sexes
7. \_\_\_\_\_ For many Muslim women, their greatest influence is within the
  - a. school.
  - b. marketplace.
  - c. home.
8. \_\_\_\_\_ Progressive Muslim women seek
  - a. reform in clothing, economic, and education practices.
  - b. a return to rural women's roles.
  - c. to imitate Western feminists.

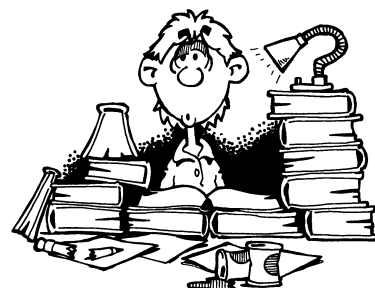
## Unit 10: Gender Issues

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9. \_\_\_\_\_ Western media portrayals of Muslim women often overlook
- a. veil wearing and sex segregation.
  - b. male dominance and dependence upon husbands.
  - c. positive, personally fulfilling aspects of women's roles within Islam.
10. \_\_\_\_\_ Restrictions in Muslim women's roles can offer protection from
- a. stress, indignities, and competitions outside the home.
  - b. personal aspirations to excel in political leadership.
  - c. dominance by overbearing males.
11. \_\_\_\_\_ Attitudes toward gender equality within Hindu practice could best be described as
- a. feminist.
  - b. ambivalent.
  - c. male sexist.
12. \_\_\_\_\_ In Confucian practice, what is the traditional standing regarding women?
- a. Equal with men
  - b. Superior to men
  - c. Subservient to men
13. \_\_\_\_\_ The influence of Confucian teaching stemming from filial piety resulted in woman's status wherein the woman was
- a. obedient, retiring, silent and fertile.
  - b. aggressive, loud, boisterous and of a warrior spirit.
  - c. associated with dragon goddesses.
14. \_\_\_\_\_ Some analysts see Christian influence in the Philippines as negatively impacting women because
- a. divorce becomes so easy to obtain.
  - b. of societal impact of the church's opposition to divorce.
  - c. annulments are so inexpensive and easy to obtain that marriage vows become meaningless.

15. \_\_\_\_\_ What is probably the most significant gender issue affecting deployed U.S. Armed Forces personnel to East Asia?
- a. Equal pay for equal work
  - b. Prostitution
  - c. Filial piety
16. \_\_\_\_\_ In parts of South Korea and Japan, what factor influences the considerable demand for prostitutes?
- a. Excessive ratio of men to women in the region
  - b. Influence of Buddhist Sangha practice
  - c. Presence of military bases and installations
17. \_\_\_\_\_ The recent Asian Women's Fund, established by Japan to compensate former comfort women, is a result of
- a. forced sex practice upon women by soldiers during 1932-1945.
  - b. the U.N. Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
  - c. the Fourth World Conference on Women--Beijing, 1995.
18. \_\_\_\_\_ Filial piety is
- a. Confucian family relations guiding children with parents and older generations.
  - b. spiritual prayers in the Taoist tradition.
  - c. a code of conduct for Samurai warriors.
19. \_\_\_\_\_ Yin/yang relationships are meant to interact
- a. harmoniously.
  - b. with friction.
  - c. laboriously.
20. \_\_\_\_\_ What East Asian school of thought emphasizes the virtues of passivity, adaptability and sense of yielding, thought by some traditionalists to express "female" virtues?
- a. Zen Buddhism
  - b. Taoism
  - c. Tantric Buddhism

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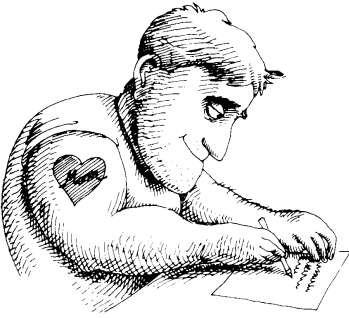
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    "When the woman confessed for the fourth time,  
    Stoning her to death became necessary...  
    Her guard...  
    finished her off by lifting a cement block...  
    this is the age of cement,  
    not stone,  
    and, at last, death-by-stoning has given way to death-  
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"Make a difference. The time each of us is 'in charge' is short.  
By leaving things better than they were, you will be making  
history..."  
(General John A Wickham, Jr.)

